



FR-4915-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

Information Collection Activities; Rail Depreciation Studies

ACTION: 30-day notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork burdens, and as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 44 U.S.C. 3501-3519 (PRA), the Surface Transportation Board (Board) gives notice that it is requesting from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval of the information collection—Rail Depreciation Studies—further described below. The Board previously published a notice about this collection in the Federal Register on July 30, 2012, at 77 Fed. Reg. 44710. That notice allowed for a 60-day public review and comment period. No comments were received.

Comments may now be submitted to OMB concerning (1) whether this collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the Board, including whether the collection has practical utility; (2) the accuracy of the Board's burden estimates; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on the respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology, when appropriate.

DATE: Written comments are due on April 26, 2013.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be directed to the Office of Management and Budget, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Attention: Patrick Fuchs, Surface

Transportation Board Desk Officer, by fax at (202) 395-5167; by mail at OMB, Room 10235, 725 17th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20500; or by email at OIRA_SUBMISSION@OMB.EOP.GOV. Comments should refer to the title of the collection commented upon.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For additional information, contact Paul Aguiar at (202) 245-0323 or aguiarp@stb.dot.gov. [Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) for the hearing impaired: (800) 877-8339.]

SUBJECTS: In this notice the Board is requesting comments on the following information collection:

Title: Rail Depreciation Studies

OMB Control Number: 2140-XXXX

Form Number: None

Type of Review: Collection in existence without a Control Number.

Respondents: Class I railroads

Number of Respondents: 7

Estimated Time Per Response: Between 500 and 540 hours annually, depending on whether the rail-carrier respondent has significant assistance from outside consultants, resulting in an average of 515 hours per response.

Frequency of Response: Every 3 years for equipment; every 6 years for other depreciable property.

Total Annual Hour Burden: 3,605 hours (515 hours X 7 Class I railroads).

Total Annual "Non-Hour Burden" Cost: Between \$8,340 and \$30,000 annually, depending on whether the rail-carrier respondent has significant assistance from outside

consultants, resulting in an annual per railroad average of \$20,500 and a cumulative total for all 7 Class I railroads of \$143,500.

Needs and Uses: Under 49 U.S.C. 11143, the Board is required to identify those classes of property for which rail carriers may include depreciation charges under operating expenses, and the Board must also prescribe a rate of depreciation that may be charged to those classes of property. Pursuant to the Board's authority under § 11145 and 49 CFR Part 1201, Section 4-2(b), Class I (large) rail carriers are required to submit to the Board Depreciation Studies. Information in these studies is not available from any other source. The Board uses the information in these studies to prescribe depreciation rates. These depreciation-rate prescriptions state the period for which the depreciation rates therein are applicable. Class I railroads apply the prescribed depreciation rates to their investment base to determine monthly and annual depreciation expense. This expense is included in the railroads' operating expenses, which are reported in their R-1 reports (OMB Control Number 2140-0009). Operating expenses are used to develop operating costs for application in various proceedings before the Board, such as in rate reasonableness cases and in the determination of railroad revenue adequacy.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the PRA, a Federal agency conducting or sponsoring a collection of information must display a currently valid OMB control number. A collection of information, which is defined in 44 U.S.C. 3502(3) and 5 CFR 1320.3(c), includes agency requirements that persons submit reports, keep records, or provide information to the agency, third parties, or the public. Section 3507(b) of the PRA requires, concurrent with an agency's submitting a collection to OMB for approval, a 30-day notice and comment period through publication in the Federal Register

concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of an existing collection of information.

Dated: March 21, 2013.

Jeffrey Herzig

Clearance Clerk

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